

Combining Sentences and Sentence Parts

ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

sentence: group of words that expresses a complete thought

sentence part: basic element of a sentence—subject, verb, object, etc.

phrase: group of words that does not contain a subject and a verb

clause: part of a sentence that, in itself, contains a subject and a verb

compound sentence: two complete ideas linked by *and*, *but*, or *or*

complex sentence: sentence with two clauses joined by a transition word

HERE'S HOW

Step 1: Move a sentence part—subject, verb, object—from one sentence into the other. Link the two with a conjunction—*and*, *but*, or *or*.

EXAMPLES

Draft: Dogs eat meat. Cats eat meat, too.

Revised: Dogs and cats eat meat.

Draft: Lizards can eat fruit. They can eat vegetables. They can also eat insects.

Revised: Lizards can eat fruit, vegetables, or insects.

Step 2: Reduce one sentence to a phrase; then insert it into the other.

EXAMPLES

Draft: I was baking a cake. I was in the kitchen.

Revised: I was in the kitchen baking a cake.

Draft: I did not read the whole recipe. I wanted to save time.

Revised: To save time, I did not read the whole recipe.

Draft: The result taught me to follow directions. It was a soggy mess.

Revised: The result, a soggy mess, taught me to follow directions.

Step 3: Use correct grammar and punctuation to join sentences. Follow these rules:

1. When two related ideas are *equally* important, use the conjunctions *and*, *but*, *or*, *so*, or *nor* to create a **compound sentence**.

EXAMPLES

Draft: My dog's name is Elmer. My cat's name is Phoebe.

Revised: My dog's name is Elmer, and my cat's name is Phoebe.

2. When the ideas are *not* equally important, use conjunctions such as *after*, *when*, *because*, *although*, etc. to create a **complex sentence**.

EXAMPLES

Draft: Parrots can be mean. They make great pets.

Revised: Although parrots can be mean, they make great pets.